

## Emergency Support Function #2 Communications

**Primary District Agency:** Office of the Chief Technology Officer

**Support District Agencies:** Department of Parks and Recreation  
DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department  
DC National Guard  
DC Public Schools  
Department of Corrections  
Department of Employment Services  
Department of Health  
Department of Human Services  
Department of Public Works  
District Department of Transportation  
Emergency Management Agency  
Metropolitan Police Department  
Office of Cable Television and Telecommunications  
Office of Communications  
Office of Property Management  
Water and Sewer Authority

*Non-Governmental Organizations:*

Radio Emergency Associated Communication Teams  
Verizon

**Lead Federal Agency:** National Communications System

### ***I. Introduction***

#### **A. Purpose**

ESF #2—Communications ensures the provision of communications support to District response efforts following a declared public emergency under the District Response Plan (DRP). The primary agency coordinating this ESF is the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO).

## **B. Scope**

ESF #2 coordinates District actions to be taken to provide the required communications support to District emergency response elements. This ESF will coordinate the establishment of required temporary communications and the restoration of permanent communications. Where appropriate, services may be furnished under provisions of the Telecommunications Service Priority system. ESF #2 applies to all District departments and agencies that may require communications services or whose communications assets may be employed during an emergency response.

## ***II. Policies***

- A. The 2000 DC Telecommunications Plan prescribes the planning and use of District communications assets and resources in support of the provisions of the federal communication acts.
- B. Pub. L. 81–686 contain the authority for OCTO to develop plans and coordinate and manage communications support for District organizations during public emergencies.
- C. When a public emergency is of sufficient severity and magnitude to surpass local agencies capabilities, an appropriate request for private sector support or federal assistance will be initiated.
- D. Emergency response agencies as well as appropriate support agencies and applicable volunteer organizations will provide staff liaison support for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) when it is activated as required.
- E. Agencies have designated certain personnel as normal, critical, or super-critical users. These designations were made based on each agency staff member's responsibilities during a public emergency.
- F. The following voice/text messaging services have been arranged by ESF #2 for agency personnel in key emergency preparedness agencies in the following categories:
  - 1. Plain telephone service is available for the normal user. They will compete with the balance of the District population and will likely experience severe competition for dial tone.
  - 2. 1-800 number access allows normal users access to less competitive federal government long-distance circuits to complete local calls to pre-assigned District 1-800 numbers.

3. Normal cellular service is provided by AT&T and Verizon Wireless. Users compete with other subscribers for dial tone.
4. Two-way, combination cellular and digital two-way radio service (Nextel) provides private network cellular service and point-to-point two-way radio service. Users compete with other Nextel subscribers for services provided by Nextel. Users do not compete when connecting to another Nextel device (Direct Connect).
5. Personalized text-messaging service by Arch Wireless provides store and forward point-to-point communications. Users compete with other Arch Wireless network subscribers. The messages are non-secure, are retained by the vendor for five years, and are available under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
6. Private Emergency Communications Network (PECN) (Verizon) provides dial tone service and lines, circuits, and switch components for local calls, which are independent of normally provided services. Federal funding will be used for the development of a separate, redundant network.
7. Switch Redirect (SR) relocates District government telephone numbers and subscribed services to District government incident command centers and other emergency locations. SR telephone numbers must be predesignated, and “unused” phones must be available to activate at the incident command centers or emergency locations.
8. National Security Emergency Preparedness (NSEP) priority cellular service provided by Verizon, provides priority, non-encrypted service for emergency use over Verizon’s regular cell networks. Verizon will supply the District government up to 100 “dual chip” NSEP cellular phones.
9. The Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) landline card provided by the National Communications System (NCS), with AT&T, MCI, and Sprint circuits/lines, provides high-priority long-distance circuits to complete local and long-distance calls. By dialing a pre-designated number, local and long-distance calls will compete on the NSEP federal government long-distance network. Users compete with other high-priority NSEP government users. Call completion depends on first obtaining local dial tone, which GETS does not provide [provided by Essential Service Protection (ESP) (see below)].
10. The Federal Telecommunications System (FTS) 2001 card provided by Sprint supplies high-priority long-distance circuits to complete local and long-distance calls and allows an audio teleconferencing bridge. Users compete with all federal government users.

11. The District of Columbia government dedicated tie line is provided by Verizon. It provides a discrete set of super users with non-competing local service throughout the Verizon DC government telephone network.
  12. ESP provided by Verizon offers priority local dial tone.
  13. Home Phone ESP is provided for home phones for a select group of super-critical users.
- G. Two additional systems that can be accessed are the Washington Area Metropolitan Warning System (WAWAS) and the National Warning System (NAWAS). These systems are set up through FEMA and located at EMA, which serves as the central communications point within the District as well as the Region. They provide communication with and access to local and national military and law enforcement support. The Fire Mutual Aid Response System (FMARS) and the Police Mutual Aid Response System (PMARS) can be utilized as well.

### ***III. Situation***

#### **A. Disaster Condition**

1. A public emergency may result from a significant natural disaster, technological emergency, or any other incident that causes extensive damage and/or results in a high volume of requests from all District agencies for services required to save lives and alleviate human suffering. These authorities require accurate and timely information on which to base decisions and guide response actions. Concurrently, commercial communications facilities may sustain widespread damage. At a time when the need for real-time electronically processed information is greatest, the capability to acquire it may be seriously restricted or nonexistent. In such situations, all surviving communications assets of the various government agencies, augmented by extra assets, will be needed immediately to ensure a proper response to the needs of victims of the event.
2. When activated, ESF #2 will coordinate and support communications requirements across the emergency continuum.

#### **B. Planning Assumptions**

1. Initially, District officials focus on coordinating lifesaving activities concurrent with reestablishing control in the disaster area. Working with the communications industry, officials will restore and reconstruct communications facilities as the situation permits.

2. Initial damage reports may be fragmented and provide an incomplete picture concerning the extent of damage to communications facilities.
3. Weather and other environmental factors may restrict the ability of suppliers to deploy mobile or transportable communications equipment into the affected area.
4. The affected area's ability to communicate with the rest of the District may be impaired. Some key individuals may be isolated from their offices and/or operational centers.

#### ***IV. Concept of Operations***

##### **A. General**

1. The Chief Technology Officer will be the single point of contact (POC) for the communications industry in the emergency area for District communications requirements and will coordinate the industry's response. The Chief Technology Officer will coordinate with the federal communications officer regarding possible federal communications requirements.
2. OCTO has overall responsibility for the coordination of communications support in the response area. When communications assistance is requested during a public emergency response, the Chief Technology Officer is the responsible staffer. This officer prioritizes conflicting requests and recommends solutions.
3. The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) controls its communications assets [i.e., Mobile Command Post (DC-10)] in the emergency areas but coordinates their use with the Chief Technology Officer. Other agencies, such as the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (DCFEMS), that provide communications assets in support of the emergency response also would control their organic assets but would coordinate their use with the Chief Technology Officer and the EMA Director.
4. Communications management will occur on a bottom-up basis; decisions will be made at the lowest level, with only those issues requiring adjudication or additional resources being referred to the next higher management level.
5. Previously distributed emergency telecommunications capabilities and devices will be used throughout the entire ESF #2 operating environment. These capabilities and devices are described above.

**B. Organization**

1. Response operations for a public emergency other than regular duties will normally begin when the DRP is implemented. ESF #2 will selectively activate specific support activities based on the nature and scope of the event, the types of service disruption (e.g., voice, data, e-mail, Internet), and the OCTO and other District resources required to support response efforts.
2. District ESF #2 operations will normally commence when the DRP is implemented.

**C. Notification**

OCTO is always available to assist industry response operations during day-to-day planning and coordination of communications support, including public emergency response activities. If ESF #2 is activated, OCTO will notify the Chief Technology Officer immediately. The Chief Technology Officer will then alert all emergency communications personnel and volunteers and assume District-level coordination of communications assets as necessary.

Immediately upon receipt of information about the public emergency and upon notification of ESF #2 activation, the Chief Technology Officer will contact the EMA Director for information and guidance on the situation and ongoing response planning and will coordinate ESF #2 response preparations.

**D. Response Actions****1. Initial Actions**

- a. Immediately upon notification of a public emergency, the Chief Technology Officer will begin gathering damage assessment data from the District government and industry representatives. The Chief Technology Officer, in coordination with the EMA or Consequence Management Team Director, will determine the appropriate level of response for ESF #2 elements. The initial focus of the Chief Technology Officer will be to:
  - Determine operational communications assets available for use within the affected area;
  - Identify communications assets not within the affected area that may be brought physically or employed electronically to support the affected area;
  - Assess actual and planned actions of the commercial communications companies toward recovery and reconstruction of their facilities;

- Validate operational status of ODC 1 and 2 as primary physical relocation sites (If necessary, move to pre-established plan and relocate critical staff to alternate/backup site);
  - Dispatch telephone, GIS, Internet, and network technicians to EOC;
  - Relocate to ODC 2 and await further instruction from Tier 1 personnel for location and deployment of resources;
  - Ensure relocation of critical staff;
  - Establish and validate telephone connections to EOC;
  - Gather initial data, voice, broadcast, data communications, and data processing damage information;
  - Ensure continuing operations of principal data processing and communications operations. If this is not possible, institute previously established gradual degradation processes and inform the EOC of the institution of these processes; and
  - Remain in continual contact with the EOC, advising of near-term actions being taken to restore priority data processing and communications capabilities.
- b. Communications personnel, in coordination with the Chief Technology Officer, will begin an inventory of District communications assets available to support the recovery mission. District agencies with communications assets may be asked to contribute these assets to the response effort. The Chief Technology Officer as well as the CMT will be kept informed of these assets and their status. Potential Chief Technology Officer actions include the following:
- Obtaining information from ESF #1—Transportation about road, rail, and all transportation conditions in the area and whether they can be used to get mobile telecommunications systems into the area;
  - Assessing the need for mobile and transportable communications equipment when notified (the Chief Technology Officer may request ESF #2 member organizations to identify assets for possible deployment); and
  - Assessing the need for communications industry support in coordination with the EMA Director and ensuring that such support is available as needed.
- c. ESF #2 support agency representatives will be aware of their capabilities to provide mobile or transportable resources for communications activities.
- d. Support agencies with assets in the disaster area will have representation on ESF #2 and will coordinate required connection to

commercial or government communications resources through the Chief Technology Officer.

## **2. Continuing Actions**

- a. ESF #2 will provide information to ESF #5 for situation reports and action planning.
- b. The ESF #2 member organizations that have been tasked to provide assets will confirm with the Chief Technology Officer that those assets have been prepared for movement to the emergency area. Reports of when they have been deployed and have become operational will be provided, as needed.
- c. ESF #2 is responsible for:
  - Coordinating District communications support to responding agencies and quasi-governmental and voluntary relief organizations;
  - Recommending the release of District communications resources when they are no longer required;
  - Maintaining a record for audit of all communications support provided (ESF #2 member organizations' procedures will be used to accomplish this audit.);
  - Providing damage information to the CMT Director and other ESFs regularly, and to other District agencies upon request;
  - In coordination with ESF #5, developing and promulgating information collection guidelines and procedures to enhance assessment, allocation, and coordination of government and industry telecommunications assets.

## ***V. Responsibilities***

### **A. Primary District Agency**

**Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)**—OCTO will ensure the provision of adequate communications support to District response operations through coordination with the Chief Technology Officer. The Chief Technology Officer is responsible for:

- Supporting the EOC as required in accordance with the SOPs issued by the EMA Director;
- Ensuring that all information regarding potential and/or actual public emergency situations with significant communications implications is brought to the attention of the EMA Director;

- Coordinating response activities with EMA and other agencies;
- Monitoring the status of crucial situations that have the potential for developing into a public emergency, and those that may require emergency communications support;
- Coordinating with ESF #12—Energy, for energy regarding the communications industry, emergency fuel resupply, and safe access for telecommunications work crews into emergency areas;
- Monitoring the recovery efforts and, as required, coordinating the provision of telecommunications needed by the District government;
- Providing situation status to the EMA Director as required;
- Monitoring the status of crucial situations that have the potential for developing into a public emergency to determine that adequate communications services are being provided to support response operations;
- Assessing the impact on existing District government communications services;
- Coordinating the restoration and/or rerouting of existing District government communications services and the provisioning of new communications services;
- Coordinating with communications service providers and prioritizing requirements as necessary when providers are unable to satisfy all communications service requirements, or when the allocation of available resources cannot be fully accomplished at the field level;
- Coordinating with ESF #2 member organizations to obtain additional communications specialists to augment ESF #2;
- Coordinating with District agencies those special telecommunications industry requests for assistance that support activities, emergency fuel resupply, and safe access for communications work crews into emergency areas; and
- Coordinating with appropriate government and industry representatives in support of Chief Technology Officer requests to meet user requirements for cellular phone assets.
- Continually evaluate and update communication technology.

## **B. Support District Agencies**

1. **Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)**—DPR will utilize the 800-MHz radio system to coordinate response efforts during a telecommunications outage. Additionally, DPR, due to its close proximity to the EOC, will be able to provide some communications backup equipment using older, non-date-dependent radios during a telecommunications outage.
2. **DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (DCFEMS)**—DCFEMS will utilize the current 800-MHz radio system as the primary

communication link. DCFEMS is co-located with MPD at the Public Safety Communication Center for Emergency 911 support and is capable of receiving and dispatching incoming emergency phone calls.

3. **DC National Guard (DCNG)**—DCNG will operate on its frequency, which has an interface with the EOC, and will provide a liaison to the EOC.
4. **DC Public Schools (DCPS)**—DCPS will utilize the 800-MHz radio system as its secondary communications system and will have a liaison in the EOC.
5. **Department of Corrections (DOC)**—DOC will utilize its own systems that have an interface with the EOC to conduct operations inside and outside of jail facilities.
6. **Department of Employment Services (DOES)**—DOES will follow OCTO communications procedures. In the event of a telephone system communication failure, DOES will utilize cellular phones, pagers, and computer modems. DOES will participate in the OCTO emergency communications plan, including switching to the 800-MHz radio system, and/or Citywide Channel 1, to ensure that critical information is communicated.
7. **Department of Health (DOH)**—DOH normal communications will rely on the local commercial telephone system, including cellular telephones, pagers, and computer modems. In the event of a telephone system failure, DOH will employ communications work-around procedures to ensure that critical information is communicated. In addition, DOH will utilize the 800-MHz radio system as the backup communications link.
8. **Department of Human Services (DHS)**—The Oak Hill Youth Center of the DHS will maintain emergency communications by the telephone capabilities provided and by 800-MHz radio.
9. **Department of Public Works (DPW)**—DPW will respond and provide support via personnel, vehicles, and/or supplies. In the event of a breakdown of the District's communications system, DPW will use couriers to deliver documents.
10. **District Department of Transportation (DDOT)**—DDOT will use the alternate communications provided as described in the Policies section. In addition, DDOT will use the 800 MHz radio if required
11. **Emergency Management Agency (EMA)**—EMA will utilize its 800 MHz radio; coordinate the use of its communications assets with OCTO, as well as its interfaces with MPD, when required. Additionally, when the

situation warrants, EMA will notify surrounding jurisdictions and give updates as required on the WAWAS. EMA will request additional communication assistance through FEMA upon a public emergency declaration. EMA will activate local Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) and Radio Emergency Associated Citizens Teams (REACT) to compliment or augment emergency communications systems.

12. **Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)**—MPD will utilize the UHF radio system as the primary communication link. MPD Emergency 911 support is co-located with DCFEMS at the Public Safety Communications Center and is capable of receiving and dispatching incoming emergency phone calls.
13. **Office of Cable Television and Telecommunications (OCTT)**—OCTT will, in conjunction with District radio stations, broadcast the Emergency Alert System to inform District residents of pending or occurring public emergencies and what actions they should take to protect themselves.
14. **Office of Communications (OC)**—As necessary, OC will keep the public advised of the status of voice and other communication mechanisms.
15. **Office of Property Management (OPM)**—The OPM Protective Services Police (PSP) is equipped with hand-held walkie-talkies and telephones, as well as radios. During public emergencies, the OPM liaison at the EOC will keep PSP aware of all situations within District facilities. OPM will utilize the 800- MHz radio system as the primary communications link.
16. **Water and Sewer Authority (WASA)**—WASA will be available in the EOC to coordinate information with the WASA Command Center to restore service. WASA will utilize the 800-MHz system and other alternative methods to communicate in the event of an outage to all of the alternative communications capabilities provided.
17. **Radio Emergency Associated Communication Teams (REACT)**—REACT will support and provide an auxiliary communications network in the event of a breakdown in the District's communication system, and provide a liaison to the EOC.
18. **Verizon**—Verizon will provide a liaison to the EOC to ensure continuity of services and integrity of its communications infrastructure and coordination efforts during public emergencies. Verizon will review restoration processes priorities and provide technical explanations to EOC liaisons, as well as provide status briefings to OCTO.

**C. Lead Federal Agency**

- 1. National Communications System (NCS)**—The NCS is the lead federal agency for ESF #2 and will provide direct, technical and other support to the District through the District counterpart ESF, ESF #2.

Upon the declaration of an emergency or major disaster by the President under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act as Amended, April 1999, the FRP will be implemented by FEMA and other federal departments and agencies. Initially, these agencies will operate out of the FEMA Regional Operations Center (ROC), as well as provide a liaison to the EOC. Later, when the Disaster Field Office (DFO) is established near the disaster area, the agency ESF representatives that comprise the Emergency Response Team (ERT) will be in the DFO.